

DAVID DANCING BEFORE THE ARK BECAUSE OF HIS ELECTION NO. 2031

A SERMON
DELIVERED ON LORD'S DAY MORNING, JULY 1, 1888,
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*"Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel today, who uncovered himself today in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovers himself! And David said unto Michal, It was before the Lord, which chose me before your father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the Lord, over Israel: therefore will I play before the Lord. And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in my own sight: and of the maidservants which you have spoken of, of them shall I be had in honor."
2 Samuel 6:20-22.*

DAVID had been soaring up on eagle's wings. Perhaps never in his life before had he so enjoyed the public worship of God. He had forgotten everything in the delight of bringing the ark of the Lord home to his own city, where he had prepared a tabernacle for its resting place. He had thrown himself into the gladsome service of the Lord that day. Nor had he been alone in joyful adoration, for all the people had been unanimously with him in honoring Jehovah, the God of their fathers. It had been a high day, a day of days, such a day as the nation had not enjoyed in all its history.

The king came home to bless his household, wishing that all his family might share in his joy. Exactly at that moment his wife, Michal, Saul's daughter, who had felt disgusted at seeing her husband dressed like a common Levite, and leading the way in the midst of the common people, came out to meet him, full of furious scorn. Her language to him must have acted as if a man had thrown a pail of cold water into his face. With sarcastic words, villainously exaggerating what he had done, and imputing to him what he had never done, she scolded the man she had scorned. How he must have felt it for the moment! We need not wonder if some have thought that his answer was somewhat bitter. Remember that David was not Jesus, but only David.

Always suspect some danger near when you perceive too much delight. It may sound like a paradox, but it is true, and experience proves it, that we never seem to be so near meeting the devil as when we have just met our God. When our Savior had been on the Mount of Transfiguration with His disciples, He met, at the foot of the hill, a father with a child possessed of the devil! Whenever you enjoy a season of peculiarly close communion with God, and are full of very high joy, be on your guard. The very worst side of the world will be turned towards you when you have been nearest to the eternal throne. Pirates look out for loaded vessels. Probably Michal had never spoken so to David before, but then David had never danced before the ark of the Lord. Here stood the man of God confronted by one whose feelings were the very opposite of his own. Like an iceberg, she crossed the path of this great vessel, and chilled it like an Arctic winter.

This led David to reaffirm and yet more plainly state his faith in God. As many of the choicest words of our Lord Jesus were brought out of Him by the Pharisees, so, one of the choicest statements of electing love that David had made was brought out by the shrewishness of Saul's daughter. I hope it will be for our profit this morning to consider it. David justified what he had done by God's choice of him. If he had arrayed himself like a Levite, and danced with all his might before the ark in the presence of the common people, he said, "It was before the Lord, which chose me before your father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the Lord, over Israel: therefore will I play before the Lord."

Dear brethren, there is a great power in the truth of election when a man can grasp it. When he knows for himself truthfully, and by indisputable evidence, that the Lord has chosen him, then he breaks forth in songs of divine adoration and praise; then is his heart lifted up, and he pays homage to God

which others would not think of paying. The Lord Jesus has manifested Himself to him as He does not unto the world, and therefore he acts towards the Lord Jesus as the world can never act, and does what the world can never understand. I am going to speak to those of you who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, for you are chosen; faith is the sure mark of election. If you believe in Jesus, and are resting in Him, this is the token that God has chosen you from before the foundation of the world, for no man yet ever had a true faith in Christ without receiving it from God, and that gift from God is the token that He will give all other saving gifts, and that He has chosen that man to eternal salvation. The effect upon you of your knowing your election of God will be similar to the effect which it had upon David when he knew that the Lord had chosen him to be the ruler over Israel.

I. What effect had this doctrine, this experience, this inward conviction upon David? First, IT MADE GOD THE LEADING THOUGHT WITH DAVID, and I believe that, in every case where a man is inwardly persuaded of the Holy Spirit that the Lord has chosen him out of the world, the sure and certain effect is that the Lord stands out to him in a clear light, and becomes to him the greatest force in his life, the chief motive power, the main thought of his mind. Observe how David said to Michal, "It was before the Lord," and all through the chapter you constantly read that David did this and that "before the Lord." In the fourteenth verse we read, "And David danced before the Lord with all his might." It will be so; *God will be realized in every passage of our life*. Has the Lord chosen me to be His own? Then I see the hand of the Lord in my parentage, in my birth, in my bringing up, I see the hand of the Lord in my calling out from the world, and in my conversion. I see the Lord in His providence, in His preservation of me from the paths of the destroyer, in fact, everywhere I see the Lord. You will notice in the whole teaching of the Puritans, great believers in this doctrine of divine choice, that they saw God's hand in everything. The laws of nature they knew very little about, but the presence of God they knew a great deal about, and to my mind we have made a very poor exchange when we have given up the Lord for His laws, and when the whole bent of our philosophy has been to teach us that God is much further off than our fathers thought. I love still to see God when I wake, and watch through the day and believe that I see Him in all that happens. In a thunderstorm I hear the voice of God, and I see His glory in the flames of fire. I love to think of God as sending us the genial shower and the cheery sunshine, I know it is all resolved into natural law, but I am simple enough to see God rather than the law. The man who believes that God has chosen him, from that moment beholds a living God in nature, in providence, and in grace, in fact, the Lord becomes everything to him.

This was especially the case with David *in his devotion*. David that day worshipped God in spirit and in truth. A great many people, when they go up to the assembly, are very particular about their bonnets or their garments. Somebody might, perhaps, notice their bonnets, and this thought weighs heavily on their hearts. I have known people say that they could not go to a place of worship because they had not proper things to go in, their clothes being evidently a great consideration. What a turning aside from God to the tailor! Often people sit in the house of prayer, and profess to worship, but they are noticing who is there, and who is not there, and any little slip in the preacher's language is a welcome diversion to them. They think of anybody and anything rather than God. It was not so with David; to him the Lord was all in all in worship. He said to himself, "I am King of Israel, but that I may avow myself to be the true servant of Jehovah I will put on a linen garment today, like a common Levite." This he did "before the Lord." The Lord, who searches the heart, knew what David meant by his dress, by his playing upon the harp, and by his leaping and dancing in the midst of the people. It was "before the Lord" that he showed his excessive joy, and if others happened to be there as spectators, he did not repel them, but he did not restrain himself. If the Lord accepted him and his offerings and his praises he would have all that he wanted, whether the multitude or the princes of Israel accepted him or not. Now the man who believes that the Lord has chosen him unto Himself will worship the Lord alone, and will neither idolize the creature, nor even cast a side-look upon him when he is adoring his Maker. It is ours to worship always, and to worship none but Jehovah. I adore Jehovah, I take His Book in my hand; I read it believing it to be inspired, and while so doing, I do not sit as a judge, but as a disciple, I do not criticize, but I adore. I look up to Christ on the cross, and I worship God in Christ Jesus, I do not quibble about the righteousness of substitution, but I adore the wisdom and the grace which are displayed therein. He that believes that God has chosen him feels for God so high a regard that He becomes his All in All. He says, "This people have I formed for Myself," and we reply, "This God is our God forever and ever."

The effect of this truth upon David was also that, as the Lord had become the great influence of his life, and the great object of his adoration, so *He was to him his supreme Lord*. Mark well the language of the twenty-first verse, “The Lord which chose me to appoint me ruler over the people of the Lord.” David did not say, “Over my people,” he acknowledged that they were not his people, but Jehovah’s people. He was only lieutenant-governor; the Lord was still the great King of Israel. O dear friends, if you have a due sense of God’s choice of you, you recognize that Jehovah is your Lord and King. You are mindful of your stewardship; you admit that you are God’s servant. If you have property, it is not yours, but His who has chosen you. If you are placed in office in Church or State, still the Lord who has chosen you has sovereign rights over you, which you acknowledge in your daily life, only grieving that you fail to be perfectly obedient, and that, when you have done all, you are still only an unprofitable servant. Complete subordination to God is the desire of every man who delights in being chosen of the Lord. Oh, that we could practice it more and more! Those who are chosen are the Lord’s portion, and are not their own to live unto themselves. Those who hope to be saved by merit work for themselves that they may win their wages, but those who have received the gift of God, which is eternal life, live unto the Lord alone, that they may show their gratitude for His royal love. Our hearts are stout before men, but in the Lord’s presence we bow in the dust; the words of others we test and weigh, but at the Word of Jehovah we tremble. Every man who recognizes himself as chosen of God will loyally serve the glorious Lord who has chosen him. It is not ours to follow our wills, wishes, or whims, but ours to fulfill our life’s mission at all costs, knowing that He who has appointed us thereto has an absolute right to do as He wills with His own.

The great system known as “The Doctrines of Grace,” brings before the mind of the man who truly receives it God and not man. The whole scheme of that doctrine looks God-ward, and regards God as first, and the plan of salvation as chiefly arranged for the glory of the Most High. If you believe that everything turns upon the free will of man, apart from any purpose of God, you will naturally have man as the principal figure in your landscape, but if you believe that there is a choice on the part of the Lord, then God will become prominent in your thoughts. If you look to be saved by your own works you will of course think much of yourself; if you believe your faith and your repentance to have come to you without the work of the Spirit of God, you will think well of yourself, and if you believe that your future perseverance depends upon your unaided self, you will look to yourself for everything, and you will rely upon your own wisdom and strength. The doctrines which are not of grace lead you away from God and throw you upon self. On the other hand, if you fully believe the doctrine which Jonah learned in the belly of the great fish—“salvation is of the Lord”—then you will trust in God, hope in God, love God, worship God, serve God, and God will be even unto you as the rising sun, shining more and more in your heart unto the perfect day. I do pray that God may be great, and greatly to be praised in the heart of every one of us. May we serve Him with gladness, and come before Him with thanksgiving, for we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.

II. Secondly, IT WILL CREATE IN US A PROPER DISREGARD FOR HUMAN OPINION. I have already told you that *in his worship David did not allow the opinions of men to weigh with him*. He worshipped “before the Lord,” and there he left it. Men might judge him mad, as Michal seems to hint that he was, or they might condemn him as fanatical, extravagant, and rabid, but this was as the chaff of the threshing floor to him. If any despised him in their hearts he was not moved thereby, for so long as he knew that his heart was right before God, and that his worship was accepted of God, he would let others commend or censure at their own sweet wills. God’s chosen servant is not the servant of men. He could not serve two masters, and he does not try to do so. He goes about his Master’s business with a holy liberty of soul, for his bonds are loosed towards man.

He does not seek honor from the many. You remember Saul, and what he said to Samuel. Samuel turned away from him in indignation, and was about to leave him, when Saul laid hold upon him, and said, “Honor me before the people.” That was the great idea of Saul’s mind. “Honor me before the people; let the people think well of me. O, prophet of God, do not disgrace me in the eyes of the multitude, but let the people still have me in esteem.” David sought not the honor which comes from men. It would have struck some minds that if the king wore the ordinary garment of a Levite, if he mixed with the crowd, if he became one of the people, if he walked in procession with them, if he even led them in the holy dance, then the common crowd would say in their hearts, “Is this a king? Why should we obey a

man who is one of ourselves?” Potentates surround themselves with pomp, and keep themselves apart, that they may have glory in men’s eyes. But it did not occur to David to provide against such a danger when the glory of God was concerned. The populace might think as they pleased of him, he was the elect of God, and therefore he did not consider his standing with the people. In the presence of God it became him to abase himself, and he did so, whether it was good policy or not. Kings before God are only men, and however bright their crowns or high their thrones, when they worship they must lay aside their trappings and affectations of superiority, and must bow before Jehovah in the dust. So King David did, and in doing it, he had no fear lest the multitude should hold him in the less esteem. O child of God, have a holy disregard of that *Vox Populi* which is profanely said to be *Vox Dei*, but which once cried, “Crucify Him, crucify Him.”

David did not even consult the judgment of the few. Of course, he had around him a little set of special people, the *elite* of Israel, who had great reverence for royalty and all its dignity. Michal was the representative of these. Looking out of the window, she looked down upon David in a double sense, for she could not bear to see a king dressed as a servant, a king dancing before the ark. She thought him light-headed, and frivolous, if not distinctly mad. No doubt, there are particularly nice and dainty people who will censure God’s chosen if they live wholly to His praise, and they will call them eccentric, old-fashioned, obstinate, absurd, and I don’t know what besides. From the window of their superiority they look down upon us. Suppose they do. They may wait until it is their turn to look up, and that will come sooner than they think. The man who says, “God has chosen me,” can afford to let others think and speak after their own nature. It is his business to take his stand separately and deliberately and distinctly to do what he believes to be right, and let the many or the few do as they will.

Beloved, *the doctrines of grace put the very idea of honoring man out of court with us.* Go and listen to certain preachers, and hear how they enlarge upon the dignity of human nature. My friend Dr. Pierson, who prayed just now, has accepted very little of modern teaching upon that point, for he confessed unto God that we were worse than the worms we trod upon. What do you say to that? We are not very dignified creatures according to that statement, and I fully endorse it. Dignity of human nature! Dignity of flesh which goes to corruption and the worm! Let those who will extol the creature of an hour, I glorify the Creator, who is everlasting. Fallen human nature deserves no praise. It is not easy to find terms humiliating enough fitly to describe the degradation into which sin has brought us, and the helplessness in which sin has left us, and the need of sovereign grace to save us from perishing forever. If any think that we should magnify man, we are of another mind, for we wonder that the Lord should be mindful of him, and visit him. The Lord of hosts will not endure that man should magnify himself, for He has purposed to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the excellent of the earth.

Proud man-worshippers will despise you if you hold the doctrines of grace; they want something novel, and so they sneer at you as a piece of antiquity. Be content to be old-fashioned, God’s choice of you is older than the fashions, and if that stands, you may well stand by the truth of it. Some will despise you for your simplicity, and insinuate that you are destitute of culture and science, and are repeating exploded dogmas only believed in by the illiterate. This refutes itself, for the truly wise never show contempt of others. After all, God’s truth is more profound than all the speculations of men. “The foolishness of God is wiser than men.” Hold to God’s truth, challenge it who may. If you find a doctrine in God’s Word which flatters human nature, let me know of it. I find therein great truths which lay our nature among the diseased, the condemned, and the dead, but none which sing our praises. The Scriptures tell us that we must be born again, and called out of our spiritual graves by a miracle; they also tell us that we are not saved by our works, and that “it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy.” We are saved by grace and grace alone, and that grace is free and sovereign according to that wondrous word, “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” So, you see, the effect of this doctrine, when it is really grasped, is to set the Lord on high in the soul, but to put human opinion in a lower place.

III. Then, thirdly, A SENSE OF ELECTION CAUSES A LOW OPINION OF SELF. David said, “I will yet be viler than thus, and will be base in my own sight.” David would more and more abase himself before the Lord. He felt that whatever Michal’s opinion of him might be, it could not be more humbling than his own view of himself. Brother, if any man thinks ill of you, do not be angry with him, for you are worse than he thinks you to be. If he charges you falsely on some point, yet be satisfied, for if he

knew you better he might change the accusation, and you would be no gainer by the correction. If you have your moral portrait painted, and it is ugly, be satisfied, for it only needs a few blacker touches, and it would be still nearer the truth. "I will be base in my own sight." This was well said. Perhaps if David had carried it out more fully, and had been rendered watchful thereby, it might have saved him from his great fall. A sense of electing love will render you base in your own sight. I will tell you why.

First, you will *never understand why the Lord has chosen you*. Often will you sing—

*"What was there in me that could merit esteem,
Or give the Creator delight?"*

*"'Twas even so, Father,' I ever must sing,
'Because it seemed good in Your sight.' "*

The more sure you are of the divine choice, and the better you understand it, the more will you inquire, "Why me?"

I dare say David, in a few quick thoughts, reviewed *his former estate*. He saw himself as the shepherd's boy keeping a few sheep in the wilderness. He saw himself fetched home all in a hurry, because Samuel had asked for him. The prophet had come to anoint one of Jesse's sons, and each one of the big brothers imagined that he himself must be the Lord's chosen, but his hopes were quenched as the prophet cried, "Neither has the Lord chosen this." David must be brought in. What a change from the shepherd boy with a crust in his wallet, to the king who "dealt among all the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to everyone a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine"! David could not remember the change without feeling that he was unworthy of such goodness. Is it not the same with us?

Then the king recollected *the dangers and troubles he had experienced*. Oh, that some persons who talk so proudly could but know a little of the rough side of life! Hunted like a partridge on the mountains, bearing his life in his hand for many a day, David had at last passed out of persecution, and had become the accepted king of all Israel! Because the Lord had chosen him, He had helped and saved him from the hand of all his enemies. His bitter experiences made him wear his honors meekly. Brother believer, if you have had a tried experience, you will look back upon it with deep gratitude and self-abasement. The tears will be in your eyes as you sing of judgment and mercy, and abundantly utter the memory of His great goodness. I cannot exalt myself, nor talk of my works, my prayers, my desires, my seeking of the Lord, or anything that is my own, for my salvation was all of grace, and the Lord worked all my works in me. The doctrine of distinguishing grace sinks us, and our experience in connection with it sinks us; we cannot lie low enough before the Lord.

David's *high position* must have made him feel lowly when he knew to whom he owed it all. When a man prospers little by little he may become used to it and grow proud, but when the Lord heaps on His bounties, we become like Peter's boat, which was so filled with fish that it began to sink. Well may we be humbled by the great mercies of the Lord. "Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." A little while ago we were heirs of wrath even as others. How could the Lord adopt such poor creatures? I cannot make it out. I that once loved sin am now made to hate it. I, that was a stranger to God and to His service, am enriched with access to the throne of God. I that was without strength have now grace to do all things through Christ that strengthens me. Oh the greatness, the unspeakable greatness of almighty love! Brothers and sisters, if this does not humble you, then you are not really believers. If you have really obtained the mercies of the covenant through the Lord's gracious choice of you, the knowledge of this fact will lay you low and keep you there, your cry will be, "Why me, Lord; why me?" I once had a dear friend, a man of God who is now in heaven, a clergyman of the Church of England, his name was Curme, and he used, with a pleasant smile, to divide his name into two syllables, and say—"Cur me," which in the Latin signifies, "Why me?"—

*"Why was I made to hear Your voice,
And enter while there's room;
When thousands make a wretched choice,
And rather starve than come?"*

All the while David had a deep sense of his personal unworthiness. He did not know his own heart fully—no man does so. But he knew enough of himself to make him base in his own sight, for he could never think himself worthy of the choice of God, and all that it involved. Our heart adores and wonders

as we think of the election of God. As we rise in the assurance of the divine choice, we sink in our valuation of ourselves.

IV. A SENSE OF DIVINE ELECTION FOSTERS A FEELING OF HOLY BROTHERHOOD.

There is David arrayed as a common Levite, he is down among the people, and he is leading them in the holy dance before the ark of the Lord. David, why, you ought to have had too much self-respect to be acting so! Kings should keep themselves to themselves. Dignities should be worn with decorum. Yes, but David does not feel that he is in the least degraded by associating with the people of the Lord. It is wonderful how democratic the doctrines of grace are, and how aristocratic they are too. The chosen are all kings, and when we mix with the poorest of them we are kings with kings. Free grace strips the proud, but it adorns the humble. If we can fare as God's people fare, we are well content. We despise not one of the least of Christ's little ones. David was the Lord's servant, like the rest of them, and he was not ashamed to show it, no, he rejoiced that it was so, and said, "O Lord, I am Your servant; I am Your servant, and the son of Your handmaid; You have loosed my bonds." Especially had the bonds of pride been broken from him, and he had been made to feel it a joy to be numbered with the least of the people of God.

David honored the most humble of the Lord's chosen, for when Michal talked about what the handmaids of his servants would say, he answered, "Of the maidservants which you have spoken of, of them shall I be had in honor." To be esteemed by them was a cheer to him. I would rather have the esteem of the maidservant who loves the Lord than the respect of her mistress who is a stranger to the divine life. It is better to have the love of the poorest man in the workhouse if he is a child of God, than to have honor from the most eminent of those who know not the Lord. We do not measure you, my hearers, by the amount of your money or the breadth of your acres; to us there are only two classes—the Lord's people and the Lord's enemies. To which class do you belong? If you are not among His believing people, may the Lord have mercy upon you, and bring you to His feet, but if you are among the heirs of grace, we value you above the gold of Ophir. How beautiful it is to see the learned and the illiterate, the great and the lowly, made one family by the grace of God! It is marvelous what power this has had in the Christian church, and I pray its power may be felt more and more until everything like caste and class is abolished in the church of God, and we shall become brethren indeed and of a truth. As the chosen of God, our names are written in the same book, we are redeemed with the same blood, we are called by the same Spirit, we are quickened by the same life, and hope soon to meet in the same heaven. This is the true confederation, the union of hearts in the common Lord. As the elect of God we break away from the world, but we come together in one body in Christ.

V. I have been quick upon that point, for time is flying with six wings, and I want to dwell a minute upon my third point. A SENSE OF BEING CHOSEN OF GOD STIRS A DESIRE FOR THE SERVICE OF GOD.

Such service will be *personal*. Look at David. He must serve God himself. He cannot let the priests and Levites do it; he must take a turn as a Levite himself. Lots of people allow their ministers to serve God for them, or they subscribe to societies, that by means of a committee they may serve God secondhand. The man that God has chosen must have a personal religion, and he must offer a personal service. The woman who had had much forgiven did not come to Peter and say, "Please, Mr. Peter, I have an alabaster box of ointment, will you at some proper time or other be pleased to pour it upon the Master?" No, she must break the alabaster box, and pour out the ointment herself. David cannot be satisfied with all that priests and Levites can do for him, he must honor the Lord Himself.

This personal service will be *cheerful*. "David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom into the city of David with gladness." Who should be as glad as God's elect? If the Lord has chosen me He has put a chime of bells into the belfry of my soul. Let the slaves who are earning their salvation serve Him with gloom and terror; as for me, to whom salvation has been freely given, I must come into His presence with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. The oil of gladness which is poured upon our Lord Jesus as our Head, runs down, to the least and lowest of us. If you are really chosen of God, you will take pleasure in what you can do for Him. Your duty will be your delight. You cannot do enough for your Lord; you always want to do more when you have done most, and gifts which you can present and deeds which you can perform are the greatest enjoyments of your life.

This service will be *in connection with the great sacrifice*. David served God by offering sacrifices. All along the way by which he brought the ark he left a track of blood, the blood of appointed burnt offerings and peace offerings. If you serve God aright, you will be forever remembering the cross, and the substitutionary death there accomplished for our redemption. You will only hope to be accepted in your work of faith through the one great Sacrifice for sin. We need more of Jesus in all that we do for our God.

This service should be *thoughtful*. David set to work and wrote psalms in honor of the Lord that chose him. He who loves God will take a turn at almost everything. He will sing, and bless, and pray, and preach, and a thousand other things, if he can. I would not like a string of my harp to rust. You do not know what is in you yet. Try to do something more for your Lord. Write sonnets to the praise and glory of His wondrous grace if you can.

This service must be *obedient*. David was careful that day in bringing back the ark into the tent in a proper manner. Everything was done according to law. The chosen of God feels bound to be careful of the will of Him that chose him. If God commands a thing, it must be done. It may be that he belongs to a church which does not see it, but if he sees it, he does not excuse himself by the blindness of others. If he believes that the Lord has commanded a thing, although it is said to be non-essential and secondary, he obeys. God's precepts bind His chosen. They delight to run in the way of His commandments.

This service should be *practical*. See what David did to show his love to God. He fed the people of God. Was there ever such a flock? I do not know how many millions there were, but David fed them all. "Feed My sheep," said Christ to Peter. David fed the flock committed to his charge that day. Brethren, let us look after the sheep and the lambs, and never weary of giving them food convenient for them. The Lord has chosen us on purpose that we may feed His people.

This service must be *seen at home*. If you are chosen of God you will, like David, bless your household. You will long to see your sons and daughters brought to God. Oh! How you will cry to God, even as Abraham did, "O that Ishmael might live before You!" How glad you will be if your child turns out to be an Isaac! There will be family prayer in your house if you know that God has chosen you. For the Lord might say of you what He said of Abraham; "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him." It is one of the marks of God's people that they never set up a tent without building an altar. There is no roof to a house if daily prayer is neglected. Saints will have God in the house, for their children and their servants, as well as for themselves. May the Lord's choice of you impel you to His constant service.

VI. Now I come to my last point. A SENSE OF DIVINE ELECTION WILL EXCITE SACRED ENTHUSIASM. David had an *inward delight* in God. God was his exceeding joy. Personally, I have overflowing joy in the doctrines of eternal, unchanging love. It is bliss to know that the Lord has chosen me. When I am down very low in spirit, I crave for those old books which, like the Lord Jesus, are full of grace and truth. You who are at ease in Zion can do with the chaffy modern theology, but when your heart is heavy, and especially when your conscience is under a sense of sin, you will want these two dishes on the table—free grace, and dying love, and you cannot do without them. We must have an atoning sacrifice, and free grace to make us partakers thereof. I cannot give up the doctrines of grace, for they are my life. I do not so much hold them as they hold me. The five fingers of the great doctrines of grace have enclosed my heart. I can die, but I cannot deny the imperishable truth. The doctrine of the eternal choice gives forth joy as myrrh and cassia give forth perfume. May you all know it!

In David's case his inward peace boiled over in *holy excitement*. Before the ark he was singing, he was harping, he was worshipping, and at last must show it by the joyful motion of his body. His body danced because his soul danced. It was a way of worship well known in Oriental countries, but we do not find it adopted, except when Miriam took a timbrel, and went forth with the daughters of Israel, saying, "Sing you to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider has He thrown into the sea." As Michal would not come to lead the way, as she ought to have done, David did it himself. I think I hear him as he sings, and shouts, and sings again. I think I see him throwing his whole soul into the joyful motion with which he expresses his exulting joy. Election sets the soul on fire with enthusiastic delight in God. Certain doctrines would not make a mouse move one of its ears, but the grand old doctrines of grace stir our blood, quicken our pulse, and fill our whole being with enthusiasm. They make me "feel like singing all the time." Free grace wakes me up at night, and makes me wish that I

were a nightingale, and all day long it makes me wish that I were an angel, that I might never cease my praise.

O my friends, let us praise the Lord—

*“Come, give all the glory to His holy name,
To Him all the glory belongs;
Be ours the high joy still to sound forth His fame,
And praise Him in each of our songs.”*

If my salvation were of my own working, I might fitly praise myself. If I had a finger in it, I might justly praise that finger. If I reached heaven by my own might and merits, I might justly throw up my cap in the golden streets before the cherubim. But, brethren, it is all of grace from first to last, and therefore we exult and rejoice, and leap for joy as we praise and bless the name of God!

To conclude, David felt so exultant that he wished everybody to know of his joy in God. He told all the crowd around of his delight in God, and he sang that day, “Declare His glory among the heathen, His wonders among all people.” They speak of the narrow, selfish spirit of the Hebrews; why David had a missionary spirit, and often does it flame out in his psalms. They say that those of us who believe that we are the chosen of God are narrow and selfish. We will prove the contrary by our evangelistic zeal.

The greatest missionaries that have ever lived have believed in God’s choice of them, and instead of this doctrine leading to inaction, it has ever been an irresistible motive power, and it will be so again. It was the secret energy of the Reformation. It is because free grace has been put into the background that we have seen so little done in many places. It is in God’s hand the great force which can stir the church of God to its utmost depth. It may not work superficial revivals, but for deep work it is invaluable. Side by side with the blood of Christ it is the world’s hope. How can men say that the doctrine of distinguishing grace makes men careless about souls? Did they never hear of the evangelical band which was called the Clapham sect? Was Whitefield a man who cared nothing for the salvation of the people? He who flew like a seraph throughout England and America unceasingly proclaiming the grace of God, was he selfish? Yet he was distinctly a free grace preacher. Did Jonathan Edwards have no concern for the souls of others? Oh how he wept, and cried, and warned them of the wrath to come! Time would fail me to tell of the lovers of men who have been lovers of this truth. This doctrine first makes sure to the man himself that he is the Lord’s, and then fills him with a desire to see myriads brought to bow before the Lord of love. Oh, that the Lord would speedily accomplish the number of His elect! Oh, that Christ might see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied! O my dear hearers, how I wish that you would all believe in the Lord Jesus unto eternal life! If you do not believe in Him, yet I pray that you may do so this very day, and then this very day you may share with me the exulting delight that God has chosen you from before the foundation of the world. The Lord bless you, for Jesus’ sake!

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—1 CHRONICLES 15:1-25.

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—100 (VERSION 1), 219, 233.

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